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1962/10/25

353

October 21, 1962 - Sunday

I thought this would be a day of quietude. Such is not the case. I received a message from Washington early in the morning, asking whether I expected to be in London today and tomorrow. A couple of hours later, I began to get telephone calls and messages transmitted through three separate Embassy channels, indicating that something unusual was afoot in Washington. Telegrams brought out to me were not especially enlightening until supplemented by a conversation with Bill Tyler in the Department, who said I was to meet a military plane at twelve o'clock tonight, at Greenham Common Airport. There I was to be briefed on what would later be required of me, before the plane went on to Paris and other destinations. A telegram that followed mystified me slightly by naming as one of the passengers on the plane Dean Acheson.

Archie Roosevelt and I motored out to the airfield, near Newbury, a trip of over two hours. This is a SAC base. The ship, one of the President's three jets, arrived ahead of time. Aboard it, amongst others, were Red DOWLING, Dean Acheson, Sherman Kent, and Chet Cooper. They told us there had been a great commotion for several days in Washington, as a result of the discovery that the Soviets had been busily developing a missile potential in Cuba that would be useful for offensive

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purposes. In fact, many missiles were already in place, and a large number of airplanes, including twin-engine bombers ~~were~~ ready to fly. The most dangerous thing about this capability was that medium-range ballistic missiles, with a range of 1100 nautical miles, could reach as far as Washington, and southward beyond the Panama Canal. The intermediate RBM's, with a range of 2200 nautical miles, could blanket the United States, with the exception of an area near Seattle, as well as reach south deep into Latin America.

The President had been considering this threat closely for some days. In fact, the abandonment of his campaign tour on the grounds of having a cold was a pretext for returning to Washington to face this unexpected development. The intelligence, ^{was} ~~was~~ ascertained by high altitude reconnaissance photography, the validity of which ^{is} ~~is~~ not in doubt. I was instructed to see the Prime Minister tomorrow afternoon at four o'clock, while Acheson is to brief General de Gaulle and the NATO Council later that day, and Dowling is to report the affair to ^{the} ~~the~~ Chancellor tomorrow evening. At midnight tomorrow (7:00 p.m. American time) the President is going on the air to declare how he intends to handle the crisis.

It appears there has been violent contention at home ~~as to~~ what should be done. Some advocated the hard line of wiping out the bases and equipment, but a temporizing policy seems to have won the day. It is rather unclear as to what this consists of, but the President's talk will serve ^{for} ~~as~~ elucidation.

Archie, Chet Cooper (who is to brief us more fully tomorrow) and myself returned to London about three a.m. The plane went on to Paris, and thence to Bonn.

154E/3

October 22, 1962 - Monday

The signals were changed this morning. I was told to see the Prime Minister at noon. I was also told I would be furnished with a draft of the President's proposed speech, so that Macmillan could consider it and communicate any ideas it evoked from him to the President.

Accordingly, Cooper and myself went down to Admiralty House, but had not yet received the promised draft. I had a long discussion with the PM, attended also by Lord Home, and Philip de Zulueta. I reported the gist of it in this telegram:

"Have delayed sending this telegram in anticipation receipt President's public statement which not yet here almost four hours later, except for first of several parts.

Primin still anxiously awaiting text since he wishes to communicate with President after reading it.

Cooper accompanied me, and helped brief Primin. Latter accepted validity evidence existence offensive capabilities and considered situation grave. Lord Home sat in on most of conversation.

Both British officials speculated about Soviet reaction to any embargo. They thought K might retaliate with embargo against American access to Berlin. Or he might reply by some form of harassment our foreign, especially Turkish, bases. They suspected K might suggest meeting with President and drag matter out.

But in absence knowledge contents speech such conversation was hypothetical. Primin will consider text immediately upon receipt and comment shortly thereafter."

We ~~was~~ expected the President's speech to be ready at any moment, but as the hours dragged on, nothing was forthcoming. Several calls to the Department obtained ~~received~~ only the reply that things had become fouled up, and they could not understand why we had not received the text. Finally, in desperation, we suggested that the private channel between Macmillan and Kennedy be used. This was done, and about seven o'clock tonight we had the humiliation of receiving from the British the copy of the speech, which had been promised for delivery to us before noon today.

Meanwhile, General Norstad, who ~~was~~ arrived here this morning to visit some of the leading figures in the British Government, had been inadequately briefed on the

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CU-595

proposals adopted in Washington. I sent Roosevelt over to fill him in for his forthcoming conversations with Mountbatten and Home. Thus far this has been a messy as respects this Embassy, affair, ill coordinated/ which is surprising, in view of its serious and dangerous nature.

I had an engagement to lunch with Ken Galbraith today, but he was suddenly called away, under instructions to return to India at once, where the difficulties between the Chinese and the Indians have erupted into war.

Reginald H. Pettus, of Charlotte Court House, came to see me this afternoon, with his daughter. He is a delightful fellow, and as Commonwealth's Attorney has done a fine job in the county. I ~~had~~ promised last year to give a considerable sum of money toward the reconstruction of the Court House if the local Board of Supervisors would carry out the plans advocated by Pettus. This is now being done.

As a result of briefing by Cooper and the others, I prepared notes for discussion this morning with the Prime Minister, as follows:

The letter from the President to Macmillan, on which my conversation with the latter was founded, was a recital of what steps Mr. Kennedy expected to take, and invited the PM to take the opportunity, should he wish it, to discuss the situation between themselves, by means of their private channel of communication.

October 23, 1962 - Tuesday

My morning started about midnight, when Al Wells called me regarding the Cuban affair. At one o'clock, the Prime Minister telephoned me, saying he had just had a telephone conversation with the President, and indicated that the British Government would go along with us. The PM was warm and friendly, as he ~~was~~ ^{was} earlier in the day, and said we would be discussing these matters again shortly. At about the same time, though I was unconscious of it, there was a demonstration in front of the Embassy office building on Grosvenor Square, protesting against the

CH-506

President's speech, which, in London time, ~~was~~^{was} delivered at midnight. The British morning papers did not have time for editorial comment, nor will there be much such until tomorrow~~ing~~ morning.

E and I lunched at Buckingham Palace, where the Queen entertained in honor of Laurie and Isabel Norstad, and their daughter, Mrs. Craw. The other guests were Lord Mountbatten, (Prince Philip not being present), the Homes, Antonia and Hugh Fraser, Sir Michael Adeane,^{sir} Mark Milbank, and Lady Margaret Hay. There was the usual excellent Palace food. with a ~~very~~ good 1958 Moselle. I sat between the Queen and Antonia Fraser, the former of whom displayed a lively interest in the Cuban imbroglio.

The Embassy was picketed all day by placard carriers ~~with~~^{with} such signs as Cuba si, Yankees no. Some of them had to be bodily removed from the lobby by the Police.

Eugene T. Kinnaly, Administrative Assistant to Speaker John McCormack, came with a friend to see me this afternoon. Since he had been associated with the legislative branch for almost 45 years, he had many stories, some of them droll, about happenings in the House of Representatives.

Robert Lutyens came to see me this afternoon. I have long considered having him paint my portrait, since I must leave one behind when I quit this post. He is an old friend, the son of Sir Edwin Lutyens, the famous architect.

At six o'clock, I went to Archie Roosevelt's house. to meet Hugh Gaitskell and George Brown, who were to be briefed on Cuba by Chet Cooper.

I called Joan Koch de Gooreynd this morning, to inquire about Peter. He had telephoned yesterday ~~me~~ me in a state of evident excitement, saying he was under the influence of sedatives and would have to go to hospital later this week, for the removal of "part of one arm". The chief reason for his call was in reference to an article

by Ian Fleming, in yesterday's OBSERVER, commenting on the book "The Quiet Canadian". In the course of his remarks, Fleming ~~had~~ referred to ~~the~~ ^{having} Sir Stewart Menzies ~~had~~ been Chief of MI6 during the war. de Gooreynd, as one of Menzies' deputies, took umbrage at this, saying it was the first time the identity of his Chief had ever been disclosed. I consider this an inaccurate statement, since it was well known after the war to many people that Menzies, known and addressed in his own organization only as "C", had been carrying on such work.

Joan Koch de Gooreynd said Peter had already gone to the hospital, where he would remain for two months, much of the time under sedation. She did not speak of an operation, so I begin to suspect he may be slightly off his rocker.

The Embassy sustained a massive assault this evening. About 2,000 people had gathered in Grosvenor Square, amongst them tough elements probably belonging to the Communist Party. The manifestation was ostensibly the work of the Committee of One Hundred (Lord Russell's anti-bomb people). The crowd attempted to break through the plate glass doors of the ground floor, but were repulsed by the Police. The Police Force was augmented by officers brought in from other parts of London. It finally consisted of almost 300 Bobbies. The Commandant of the Metropolitan Police District appeared in person, called away from a dinner at Claridges. Findley Burns telephoned me an account of the fracas. Several policemen were injured; about 145 protesters were removed in Black Marias, a couple of which were stoned as they drove through the streets. Had the demonstrators succeeded in breaking in, we might have had a nasty time.

October 24, 1962 - Wednesday

I spent most of the morning on the subject of protecting the Embassy. I congratulated Mr. Kemp, our new Security Officer, and Sergeant Goodwin, the

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CU-508

Non-Com heading our US Marine personnel, for the excellent way in which they handled matters last night.

The PM sent for me to meet him at Admiralty House at noon. We had a long talk, at the conclusion of which he asked me to ascertain from the US Government what classified information he would be free to use tomorrow when he must respond to questions in the House of Commons. I telegraphed home about this; at the same time, Chat Cooper put the same inquiry for me through his channel. Some hours later we received a reply, which I communicated to Philip de Zulueta.

Our people were generally agreeable to the draft passage proposed by the Prime Minister. The changes suggested were woven into the text received from him, and came out as follows:

I lunched with Douglas Fairbanks at Bucks, a hurried meal. He was to go to see Page Smith immediately after lunch, to discuss the Cuban episode.

This afternoon, I opened the Embassy orientation course, by exhorting them to be good boys and girls, worthy of their privileges.

Findley Burns brought in Commander H. J. Evans, of Metropolitan Police District No. 1, a fine looking chap, whom I thanked warmly for the splendid work of his men last night in protecting the Embassy.

Frank Pace came to see me. He is here for two purposes (1) as a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Board, and (2) as a Director of TIME-LIFE. In the latter capacity, he expects within a ~~short~~ period of eighteen months, to visit almost every country in the world, and make recommendations as to how TIME-LIFE reporting might be improved.

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"In his message and through the United States Ambassador in London President Kennedy made it clear to me on Monday, October 22 that he had become very concerned about the Soviet supplies of offensive weapons to Cuba in recent weeks. It is of course true that the United States authorities had known for some time the location of a number of surface to air missile sites in Cuba, but these missiles, even though carrying nuclear warheads, may be regarded as of a defensive nature. Very recently, however, at least eight ballistic missile sites have been definitely identified in Cuba. Normally each such site has four launchers and each launcher has two missiles. This indicates a capability of delivering a total of 64 MRBM and IRBM missiles. Reports from all American intelligence sources confirm that at least 30 missiles are already present in Cuba. MRBM missiles, with their range of over a thousand miles, could reach a large area of the United States including Washington and nearly the whole of Central America and the Caribbean including the Panama Canal. Intermediate range ballistic missiles have an operational range of 2200 nautical miles. Further sites for both types of missiles are being constructed. All these missiles are designed to carry and must be presumed to carry nuclear bombs. In addition, Russia has supplied Cuba with IL 28 aircraft, of which over twenty have been definitely identified. These bombers are of course offensive and not defensive weapons. It is interesting to note that the Soviet Union do not appear to have denied the presence of these missiles in Cuba and indeed it may be difficult for them to do so since the United States believe that there are at least five thousand Soviet military personnel already on the island."

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24-510

We had a cocktail party tonight for:

Mr. and Mrs. George Crawford
Mr. and Mrs. Harris Nelson (Barron's)
Mr. and Mrs. Julian Allen
Mr. Kenneth Fox (Kansas City Star)
Mrs. Mildred Dilling (Harpist)
Doreen Lady Brabourne
Mr. Charles Harding (Art dealer)
General and Mrs. Puryear
Mr. and Mrs. Jackson Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Frazier Meade

In connection with Embassy security, we have given strict instructions to the Marines, as well as to the rest of our personnel, that under no circumstances are they to use pistols, even if attacked. We have sent to Frankfort for a supply of tear gas, with and would expect it to repulse any attempt by rioters to penetrate above the first floor of the building. I do, however, want to reconsider whether for the protection of the code room we should not, as a last resort, open fire.

October 25, 1962 - Thursday

Chet Cooper returns to Washington this morning. In the aftermath of his visit we are still having repercussions from the release of some of the air reconnaissance pictures to the London newspapers. After midnight two days ago, Mike Forrestal called me from the Operations Room at the White House to inquire into which photographs had been shown. It seems there was a question as to whether the release in the United States should not be simultaneous. As a result of a misconstruction of what occurred, Bill Clark, our PAO, has now been referred to in the Washington Post as the "errant USIS Officer in London" who made a mistake. Russ Wiggins, of the Post, is coming to see me this afternoon, and I shall straighten it out with him.

Walter Stoessel, SHAPE Liaison Officer, came over to see me this morning, on instructions from Laurie Norstad, to give me a paper recording certain features

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of Norstad's private conversation with the Prime Minister. It was kind of the General to have gone to this trouble. He has conveyed the substance of what he told me to the President, ~~As~~ I had heard it directly myself from Macmillan, we can let the matter rest.

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CU-512

The Cuban Missile Crisis Exposed umc 2005

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited: An International Collection of Documents, from the Bay of Pigs to the Brink of Nuclear War

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited: An International Collection of Documents, from the Bay of Pigs to the Brink of Nuclear War reproduces a comprehensive collection of records from the archives of the three key governments involved in the most dangerous confrontation of the Cold war. Declassified records from the United States, Russia and Cuba significantly advance analysis of the historical foundations of the missile crisis, the policy calculations and considerations of President John F. Kennedy and premiers Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro, and the overt and covert military and paramilitary operations that combined to bring the world to the threshold of a nuclear exchange. Topics extensively covered in the documentation include the failed U.S.-led invasion at the Bay of Pigs, renewed attempts to overthrow Castro through Operation Mongoose and Operation Northwoods, U.S. military contingency planning for conflict with Cuba, naval warfare, Soviet and Cuban decision making and communications during the crisis, and the repercussions for U.S.-Soviet relations, and Soviet-Cuban relations in its aftermath. Materials were identified, obtained, assembled and indexed by the National Security Archive, a non-profit Washington D.C. based research institute and library. The microfiche collection is accompanied by a printed guide and index.

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